

April 24, 2006

## Caught in the Act: Biggest Losers

By Emily B. Moses

Paula Woodworth is glad, even if a little shy, about being a loser – the biggest loser, in fact.

Woodworth, assistant director of the Division of Childcare, and 12 of her co-workers participated in a friendly, inter-office weight loss competition patterned after the popular reality TV weight loss show, *The Biggest Loser*.

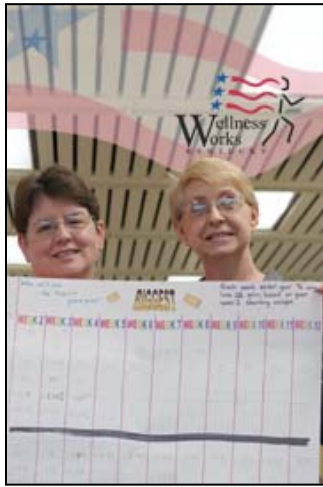
Woodworth said an employee who is no longer in the division came up with the idea. All 13 participants contributed \$10 to be put in a pot for the grand prize winner.

The competition started in mid-January and ran through the first of April.

“Everybody did something different,” said Woodworth of how the participants worked to lose weight. “I had started Weight Watchers in January. I thought the Biggest Loser would be encouraging as another way to lose weight.”

The participants weighed-in each Tuesday morning to track their progress. Weight loss was measured in percentage of body weight lost, rather than number of pounds.

While a few participants had to drop out along the way because of health-related issues, not one of the 13 gained weight during the competition.



**Paula Woodworth, left, and Laurel Walls were the first- and second-place finishers in the Biggest Loser competition.**

Woodworth lost 8.13 percent of her body weight and has since reached her first goal on Weight Watchers, 10 percent of her body weight. She's now working on her next goal.

Woodworth and her co-workers are continuing down the path to good health by participating in America on the Move.

Woodworth said encouragement from her friends, family and especially her co-workers kept her motivated during the competition and even now.

“You can only do it yourself,” she said. “But with so many people encouraging you, it helps make it happen.”

## Willa Thomas Elected to National Post

Willa Thomas, a dietitian in the Division of Aging Services, recently was elected to the office of treasurer for the Gerontological Nutritionists practice group of the American Dietetic Association.

As part of her duties as national treasurer, Thomas will serve on the Gerontological Nutritionists Core Executive Committee and ensure the fiscal integrity of the organization.



In her current position with DAS, Thomas works with the Kentucky Elderly Nutrition Program. She previously served as a long-term care surveyor in the Office of the Inspector General and director of dietary services at the former Kentucky Veterans Center and Wesley Village in Wilmore.

April 24, 2006

The most recent federal dietary guidelines issued in 2005 include key recommendations for older adults who make up one of the nation's fastest-growing population segments. These guidelines focus on health promotion and risk reduction, two objectives embraced and promoted by CHFS. Thomas said the federal nutrition guidelines form the basis for menu planning and nutrition education in the state Elderly Nutrition Program.

Thomas hopes to help ensure the viability of the nutrition program as the senior population continues its rapid growth.

Thomas has a bachelor's degree in home economics and a master's degree in nutritional science from the University of Kentucky.

## **America on the Move Teams Reporting High Numbers**

America on the Move at CHFS has taken the Cabinet by storm with hundreds of employees signed up and using their break and lunch time to add exercise into their day. The wellness program is in its third week. The top three teams in the America on the Move Wellness Works program are: Yukondoit with 598,875 steps; Sole Impact II with 594,400 steps; and Motivated Movers with 584,439 steps.

## **Employees Reminded of Rights and Responsibilities**

Supervisors conduct interim reviews during the month of April to discuss and document eligible employees' performance to date. We tend to focus primarily on supervisors' responsibilities in the evaluation process, but employees have certain rights and responsibilities related to the process, too.

Employees have a right to:

- Performance plans that clearly identify their duties and expectations.

- Fair, comprehensive and timely evaluation of their work performance.
- Their supervisors' undivided attention when discussing work performance and career goals.
- Request reconsideration of the performance evaluation with an expectation of a fair, timely reconsideration process and without fear of reprisal.
- Request assistance up the chain of command or from the appointing authority if the supervisor fails to complete any part of the evaluation process in a timely fashion.

Employees have a right and a responsibility to:

- Provide input into their performance plans and interim reviews. This includes:
  - Double-checking the employee information on the evaluation to ensure it is correct.
  - Making sure the points and expectations assigned to duties are appropriate and reasonable and that points are mathematically correct.
  - Notifying supervisors of any accomplishments or concerns at interim review meetings.
- Attach a written response to interim reviews if they feel information is missing, incorrect, etc. They may do so any time up to the beginning of the next performance review period.
- Provide input into the annual evaluation of performance. This includes checking point totals on the evaluations to ensure all math is correct.
- Verify the appropriate amount of annual leave is applied to their leave balance as a result of the final evaluation.
- Ensure supervisors provide them with a copy of the evaluation documentation at each step of the process and to maintain that copy.

Please contact your departmental evaluation liaison or the Cabinet evaluation liaison in the Office of Human Resource Management if you have questions about these rights and responsibilities.

April 24, 2006

## Celebrate Lab Services Week

The Division of Laboratory Services (DLS) in Frankfort will celebrate National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week from April 23-29. This year's theme is *Laboratory Professionals: Providing Answers. Guiding Cures*.

DLS uses this time of celebration to pat employees on the back and to interact with areas of the lab that each section may not normally see.

Currently, more than 50 laboratory professionals provide the answers for various Department for Public Health Programs in the areas of newborn screening, milk, water, HIV, bioterrorism agents, tuberculosis, pesticides, rabies, influenza and STDs.

DLS continues to improve the testing techniques and procedures available to promote the health of the Kentucky's citizens. DLS also takes this time to reaffirm its mission statement: As leaders in public health laboratory practices, laboratory staff perform unique reference testing services, provide reliable data, provide technical consultation and establish standards for clinical quality laboratory services in support of the commonwealth's commitment to promote and protect the health and well-being of the public.

For more information please visit:  
<http://www.chfs.ky.gov/dph/info/lab/> or view the schedule of [events](#).

## Employee Banks \$2,500 for Suggestion

Linda Clements, now retired from Community Based Services where she was a field services supervisor, was recently awarded the maximum amount for an employee suggestion - \$2,500!

Clements submitted her idea to save time for field staff, she said. She suggested several forms that were being sent out monthly by the field staff be sent out by an automated machine. This would save the time it took to process the forms and give the field staff more time for their caseloads.

"Because of high caseloads, the field staff needs all the help they can get in order to manage the work that is required," she said.

Clements' suggestion not only freed up precious staff time, but also saved the Cabinet \$70,7802.68.

"All employees should submit any suggestion they feel would save time and make their job easier. There are no bad suggestions," said Clements. She also says to not give up. If you really think that your idea might improve your job or somebody else's and could save the cabinet or state money, keep pushing your idea. You might just get a check for \$2,500.

Visit the Office of Human Resource Management's Web site to learn more about the suggestion program and to submit an employee suggestion:

<http://chfsnet.ky.gov/afa/ohrm/KESS.htm>.

## KDLA Resource for Employee Development

Did you know that the Kentucky Department for Libraries and Archives (KDLA) has many resources for employee development? Employee recognition resources, for example, include the best-selling *1001 Ways to Reward Employees* by Bob Nelson and *Retaining Your Employees: Using Respect, Recognition, and Rewards for Positive Results* by Barb Wingfield and Janice Berry.

The library has an expansive collection of books, videos and CD audio books for work and pleasure. KDLA will messenger mail library

April 24, 2006

materials to state employees in Frankfort. Field employees get their library materials by regular mail or UPS.

To apply for a library card, view the KDLA catalog and order library materials, please go to <http://kdla.kyvl.org>. Then click on the link “Just for State Government Employees . . .”

## CHFS Focus Health Tip: Steps for Fighting Spring Allergies

As spring rolls along many are experiencing stuffy nose, sneezing, itchy eyes or ears, and runny noses. If you are experiencing any of these symptoms you may be suffering from seasonal allergies.

The most common trigger of allergies throughout the spring months are non-flowering trees, grasses and weeds. Examples of allergy causing trees include oak, elm and birch, while grasses include timothy, Bermuda, and orchard.

You can help minimize your exposure to pollen during the spring and summer months by following these tips.

- Stay indoors with the windows shut, especially on dry, windy days, or when the pollen count is high.
- Allergy-proof your yard by eliminating offending plants, and staying away from freshly mown lawns.
- Keep pets outside as they can track pollen inside. If that is not possible, at least keep them out of the bedroom.
- Change your clothing after being outside.
- Dry laundry indoors – sheets hanging on an outside clothesline are an easy target for blowing pollen.
- Keep car windows closed during peak season. Use air conditioning and point vents away from face.

- After being outside, take a shower and wash your hair – pollen can collect on your hair and skin.
- Minimize outdoor activity when pollen counts are high. Peak pollen times are usually between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

## Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

*Employee Enrichment is a weekly feature for CHFS staff. These tips for making work better focus on team building, customer service and personal development.*



“A job worth doing is worth doing together,” goes an uncredited saying about teamwork. Groups can get more done together than as individuals doing their work separately. And when a team has done well, all its members can feel a part of its success. Sergey Dudy, a personal development expert, offers these tips on team building at his Web site, [Time-Management-Guide.com](http://Time-Management-Guide.com).

- Communicate. This goes for communication between managers and staff as well as among staff.
- Clarify team goals and roles. Avoid overlaps of authority and disproportionate responsibilities.
- Involve everyone in the decision-making process. The more each group member feels ownership of the team’s goals, the more committed he or she will be to the action steps to get there.
- Build an atmosphere of trust. Take the time to socialize away from the office. Involve everyone.
- Give one another positive feedback. A little praise can go a long way to help someone continue working hard.